

**Manchester Health Department
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PERSONAL PROTECTION AGAINST MOSQUITOES

What can I do to reduce my risk of becoming infected with West Nile virus?

From April to October, when mosquitoes are most active, take the following precautions:

- If outside during evening, nighttime and dawn hours when mosquitoes are most active and likely to bite, children and adults should wear protective clothing, such as long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and socks. Also consider the use of an insect repellant containing 10% or less DEET (N, N-diethyl-meta-toluamide) for children, and no more than 30% DEET for adults. The use of DEET is only one way to reduce the risk of mosquito bites.

USE DEET ACCORDING TO MANUFACTURER'S DIRECTIONS:

- Do not apply DEET to infants or pregnant women.
- Do not allow young children to apply DEET themselves.
- Do not apply DEET directly to children.
- Apply DEET to your own hands and then put it on the child. Avoid putting it on the hands of children or near their eyes and mouth.
- Do not spray directly on face, spray into hands first and then apply to face.
- Do not apply to cuts, wounds, or irritated skin.
- Do not use under clothing.
- Do not spray DEET-containing products in enclosed areas.
- DEET is effective for approximately four hours. Avoid prolonged or excessive use of DEET. Use sparingly to cover exposed skin and clothing.
- Wash all treated skin and clothing after returning indoors.
- Store DEET out of the reach of children.

Vitamin B, ultrasonic devices, incense and bug zappers have not been shown to be effective in preventing mosquito bites.

DEET (N, N-diethyl-meta-toluamide) Tips for Protection

The chemical, N, N-diethyl-meta-toluamide, more commonly known as DEET, is an insect repellent that can reduce the risk of mosquito bites, but must be used with caution. Products containing DEET have been occasionally associated with some health problems, such as: skin reactions, including rash, swelling and itching, eye irritation, and less frequently, confusion, seizures, and slurred speech.

If you believe you or a child is having an adverse reaction to an insect repellent containing DEET, wash the treated area immediately and contact your health care provider or the New Hampshire Poison Control Center (800) 562-8236.

West Nile Virus and the Elderly

Are older adults more at risk from illness associated with West Nile virus?

While elderly residents of areas where virus activity has been identified are probably at no greater risk of being bitten by mosquitoes carrying West Nile virus, persons greater than 50 years old have a higher risk of serious illness if bitten by infected mosquitoes.

Can the elderly go or stay outdoors during the summer?

Since mosquitoes are not generally active during the daytime, people who go on outdoor trips during the daytime are at minimal risk for exposure. However, if the field trip is to an area where there are weeds, tall grass, bushes or known high mosquito activity, or if the trip is at dusk, during the evening, nighttime or at dawn, people should be advised to wear long pants, long sleeves and socks to minimize the possibility of exposure to mosquitoes.

West Nile Virus in Dogs and Cats

Can West Nile virus cause illness in dogs or cats?

West Nile virus was isolated from a dead cat during the New York area outbreak in 1999. Most dogs or cats infected with the West Nile virus fully recover from the infection. There is no specific therapy, but in more severe cases, supportive treatment may be indicated.

Can infected dogs or cats be carriers and transmitters of West Nile virus to humans?

Infectious mosquitoes transmit West Nile virus. There is no documented evidence of person-to-person, animal-to-animal, or animal-to-person transmission of West Nile virus. Veterinarians should take normal infection control precautions when caring for an animal suspected to have this or any other viral infection.

Can a dog or cat infected with West Nile virus infect other dogs or cats?

No. There is no documented evidence that West Nile Virus is transmitted from animal to animal.

Should a dog or cat infected with West Nile virus be euthanized? What is the treatment for an animal infected with West Nile virus?

No. There is no reason to euthanize an animal infected with West Nile virus. Full recovery from the infection is likely. Treatment would be supportive and consistent with standard veterinary practices for animals infected with a viral agent.

For more information about West Nile virus, call the Manchester Health Department at 624-6466 or the NH Department of Health and Human Services, West Nile Virus Information Line at 1-866-273-6453.